

To the Framework Committee,

First, allow me to congratulate you on the revised frameworks for the Social Sciences. As a teacher who has spent twenty years teaching Government, Economics, US History, and World History at Arcadia High School, I see great potential in the new format which is based on essential questions. I have a comment and a suggestion for you:

1. 1. A comment: I have already utilized the essential question “*How was the Holocaust enacted?*” from page 469 in my World History class and followed the frameworks in my instruction. The question drove the instruction each day and my students gained better understanding of the events leading up to the Holocaust as well as the consequences of these events.
2. 2. A suggestion: On page 469, lines 920 – 924 of the *History–Social Science Framework*, Second Field Review Draft, located in Chapter 15 (Grade Ten – World History, Culture, and Geography: The Modern World), the following statement is made:

*Finally, in August 1945, the United States unleashed its most deadly weapon, the atomic bomb, in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, killing more than 200,000 people, forcing Japan to surrender, and ending World War II. Teachers may ask students to debate the controversies regarding the American decisions to launch the attacks.*

This is an excellent historical controversy and I have been teaching it in my World History classroom at Arcadia High School for nearly twenty years now. The problem with the last statement is that the perspective is only an American one. There are controversies involving the American decisions to launch the atomic bomb attacks on Japan, but there are also controversies involving the reasons why the Japanese government surrendered when they did.

My suggestion is to add the following essential questions:

*What factors caused the Japanese government to surrender in August of 1945? Students may consider the cultural and historic differences in understanding the concept of unconditional surrender between the United States and Japan as expressed in documents from the Casablanca Conference, and the Potsdam Conference. Short of dropping the A-bombs, what alternatives were available to the United States at this point in the conflict?*

*Other factors to consider include the initial refusal to surrender after the dropping of the A-bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the role of the declaration of war by the Soviet Union after the dropping of the Hiroshima bomb, the actions of the Emperor Hirohito, and the text of Hirohito’s surrender speech.*

I believe this would be a more complete way to look at this historic controversy. Perhaps the best source on the subject is *Hirohito and the Making of Modern Japan*, by Herbert P Bix. The key section dealing with this controversy can be found on pages 496 to 504 of his book.

Thank you for considering my suggestion,

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